

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BANGKO 05642 160552Z

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 DPW-01 IO-13 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SCA-01 SCS-03 /075 W

-----160558Z 052502 /21

P R 160233Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 112

AMEMBASSY MANILA

DIA WASHDC

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

JCRC BARBERS PT HAWAII

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 5642

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

FOLLOWING TEL SENT ACTION BANGKOK INFO VIENTIANE FROM UDORN

15 MAR 77 REPEATED FOR YOUR INFO

QTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L UDORN 0057

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TH, LA

SUBJECT: RELEASED THAI DETAINEES REPORT SIGHTING OF U.S.

PRISONER

REF: A. STATE 054237 B. VIENTIANE 0491

1. IN AN INTERVIEW WITH CONREP MARCH 9 IN NON KHAI PROVINCIAL CAPITAL POLICE STATION, ONE OF ELEVEN THAI NATIONALS RELEASED FROM DETENTION IN LAOS MARCH 7, MR. CHAI HANCHANA, CLAIMED THAT HE SAW AN AMERICAN NEGRO PRISONER DURING HIS CONFINEMENT IN SAM KHE PRISON, LOCATED OUTSIDE OF VIENTIANE.

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PAGE 02 BANGKO 05642 160552Z

2. MR. CHAI SAID THAT ABOUT A MONTH AFTER HIS ARREST AND INCARCERATION IN SAM KHE PRISON IN AUGUST, 1975, HE SAW AN AMERICAN NEGRO, CLAD ONLY IN UNDERWEAR AND BOUND WITH ELECTRICAL CORD BEING CARRIED INTO SAM KHE ON A STRETCHER. THE AMERICAN APPEARED TO HAVE UNDERGONE A BEATING, ACCORDING TO MR. CHAI. HE ADDED THAT, ACCORDING TO A LAO PRISONER THE AMERICAN WAS BROUGHT TO SAM KHE FROM COMBINED POLICE HEADQUARTERS AT

NANG GUANG IN VIENTIANE WHERE HE HAD BEEN DETAINED ON SUSPICION OF BEING A CIA AGENT. THIS SAME SOURCE SAID AMERICAN USED TO BE SEEN FREQUENTLY RIDING AROUND VIENTIANE ON A MOTORE-BIKE.

3. MR. CHAI SAID THAT AMERICAN WAS AT SAM KHE FOR ABOUT 5 MONTHS AND THEN APPARENTLY TRANSFERRED TO ANOTHER LOCATION. HOWEVER, PATHET LAO (PL) GUARD TOLD MR. CHAI THAT AMERICAN WAS NOT TRANSFERRED BUT RELEASED.

4. A SECOND THAI NATIONAL AMONG RELEASED DETAINEES, MR. EE KANTHA, TOLD CONREP MARCH 10 DURING INTERVIEW NONG CYEI RESTAURANT THAT HE ALSO HAD SEEN AN AMERICAN NEGRO PRISONER IN SAM KHE IN LATE 1975. ACCORDING TO MR. EE (AMERICAN APPEARED TO BE ABOUT 30 YEARS OLD, SUFFERING FROM PHYSICAL MISTREATMENT, AND WAS AT SAM KHE FOR ABOUT 5 MONTHS. MR. EE SAID PL GUARD TOLD HIM AFTER AMERICAN'S DEPARTURE FROM PRISON THAT LATTER HAD BEEN RELEASED AND PICKED UP BY U.S. AMBASSADOR.

5. CONREP INTERVIEWED TWO OTHER THAI DETAINEES WHO HAD BEEN HELD IN SAM KHE SINCE SPRING OF 1976 BUT THEY REPORTED TO HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE OF ANY AMERICAN PRISONER.

6. GIVEN POST'S PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE IN FOLLOWING UP ALLEGED SIGHTINGS OF U.S. PRISONERS IN LAOS, WE HAVE BECOME QUITE SKEPTICAL OF SUCH REPORTS. NONETHELESS, WE BRING THESE LATEST REPORTED SIGHTINGS TO MISSION'S ATTENTION FOR WHATEVER ACTION YOU DEEM APPROPRIATE. FACT THAT INFORMATION CAME FROM TWO CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 BANGKO 05642 160552Z

DIFFERENT SOURCES, INTERVIEWED SEPARATELY IN DIFFERENT LOCATIONS SUGGESTS IT MAY HAVE SOME POSSIBLE SUBSTANCE BUT WE REMAIN DOUBTFUL. ACCORDING TO NONG KHAI POLICE, THAI DETAINEES SHOULD BE IN NONG KHAI AREA FOR ANOTHER WEEK. FINNEY UNQTE WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, POLITICAL PRISONERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 16-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977BANGKO05642
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770089-0746
Format: TEL
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770356/aaaabwrd.tel
Line Count: 102
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 STATE 54237
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3097082
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RELEASED THAI DETAINEES REPORT SIGHTING OF U.S. PRISONER
TAGS: PFOR, TH, LA, US, (CHAI HANCHANA)
To: STATE MANILA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/c0f580b7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009